



Connection Points

AN INTENTIONAL MOM EXPERIENCE

FOCUS^{ON} THE FAMILY[®]



CONNECTION POINTS • DAY 1

Share Life-Giving Words With Your Kids

The difference and impact words can make and have inside the mind of a child are endless. Some words can give life, and some can be life-taking and potentially crushing in the mind of a child.

Every once in a while, I love to stop my kids, look them in the eyes with serious intentionality, and say, “I love you!” and follow it with, “Do you know that? Does your *soul* know it?” I want to make sure they understand the depth of my love for them and to create the right kind of momentum in their souls with my words.

Words can build and they can destroy.
Words carry meaning and momentum within

a person and within relationships. They can bring love, encourage, distract, bring truth, deceive, fill a room, help pass the time, connect, guide, divide, form perceptions, and get imprinted in our memories.

Have you ever stopped to think about an inventory of your words throughout the day when you’re talking to your kids? Are they life-giving?

On the following page is a list of life-giving words to help you intentionally build steadfast confidence in your child.

Be intentional in sharing life-giving words with your kid(s) today.

Life-Giving Words

What are some life-giving words you or your kids would add? Life-giving words need to be genuine and based on trust in order to give the most life.

- I love you
- I value you
- I missed you
- That was kind
- That was trustworthy
- That was funny
- That was responsible
- That was smart
- Let's spend some time together
- You're a good leader
- I enjoy spending time with you
- I forgive you
- Will you forgive me for _____?
- I appreciate _____ about you
- Thank you for _____
- I'm sorry
- I see _____ in you
- I noticed _____ in you
- I love _____ about you
- I admire _____ about you
- You mean a lot to me
- You are a blessing to me
- I love your smile
- I love to laugh with you
- You are a lot of fun to be with
- I love listening to your ideas
- That was a great idea
- You've got this
- You look attractive
- You look beautiful
- You look handsome
- That was brave
- That _____ looks good on you
- I love your hairdo
- You _____ that was _____



"Parenting is an invitation toward life. It is an invitation to co-create, build. To be transformed, to challenge, and to love deeply. Your words matter in the life and story of your child."





CONNECTION POINTS • DAY 2

Do a Craft or Cook With Your Kids

Hands-on activities that you do with your kids allow you to have fun together and create bonding time. These activities will enable you to break out of your routine, maybe get a little messy, and mix things up. More importantly, doing crafts, projects, or cooking with your kids creates space for them to ask questions, discuss difficulties, learn skills, and more. Studies have shown that kids, especially boys, will open up more during a hands-on activity than if you were to sit down with them for a conversation.

Be sure to customize these activities to your kids' personalities and interests. There are so many options available for every personality and skill level. No matter what

you choose — cooking, baking, woodworking, building, scrapbooking, crafting, painting (and the list goes on!) — the important thing is that you do these activities *together*.

After completing the activity, ask some intentional questions about what new skills they learned during the project or what part of the project they enjoyed the most and why. You may even ask them how they want to expand on the project next time, or if there is something new they would like to try or a skill they would like to improve.

Be *intentional* in sharing activities and bonding with your kid(s) today.



Dessert Crepes

GATHER

- 4 eggs, lightly beaten
- 1-1/3 cups milk
- 2 tablespoons melted butter
- 1 cup flour (gluten-free for those that need it)
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- powdered sugar
- fresh fruit (blackberries, raspberries, strawberries, blueberries, kiwis)

GO

- In a large bowl, whisk eggs, milk, melted butter, flour, sugar and salt until smooth.
- Heat skillet to medium heat and grease pan with extra butter.
- Spoon 3 tablespoons batter into skillet. Tilt and swirl pan so batter evenly coats the surface.
- Cook 1 to 2 minutes on each side or until golden brown.
- Fold crepe in thirds. Top with powdered sugar and fresh fruit. Serve immediately.



For more fun, easy craft/recipe ideas, visit clubhousemagazine.com!



CONNECTION POINTS • DAY 3

Have a Movie Night With Your Kids

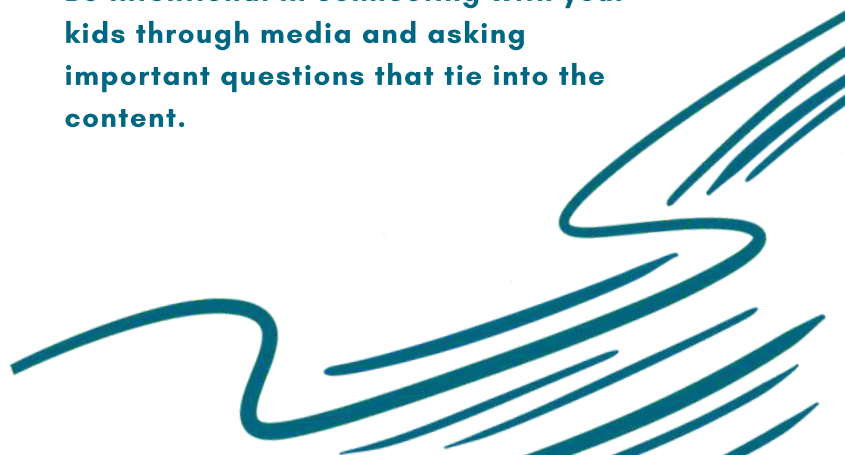
Family movie nights are a fantastic way to create some connection points with your kids. Comedies can help you laugh together. Fantasy films can help you explore and wonder together. Dramas can help you think through and talk about significant life issues.

Movie night is also a great time to make a physical connection point with your kids. Enjoy the snuggles while they're young!

When the movie is over, be sure to ask some intentional questions about the topics and worldview in the film. Questions like these will help your kids to think critically about

media in general. The discussion will also help them to explore different perspectives and use critical thinking skills about how those topics relate to their own lives or experiences. While movies are enjoyable and entertaining for the whole family, they can also be excellent opportunities for conversation and growth.

Be *intentional* in connecting with your kids through media and asking important questions that tie into the content.



Movie Ideas

Looking for some ideas? Here are just a few age-appropriate suggestions (be sure to check out the Plugged In movie reviews before you watch the movie):

IF YOU HAVE YOUNGER KIDS:

- *Finding Nemo*
- *Christopher Robin*
- *Paddington/Paddington 2*
- *Pete's Dragon*

IF YOU HAVE OLDER KIDS:

- *A Monster Calls*
- *Spider-Man: Into the Spideverse*
- *Rogue One: A Star Wars Story*
- *Soul Surfer*

Don't feel limited to these options! The goal is to find a movie that will allow you to experience a fun family movie night, and have good follow-up conversations after.

SOME DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What does this movie say is good or admirable?
- What does it suggest you should avoid?
- What character(s) do you identify with and why?
- In what ways is this story's values similar to or different from our Christian convictions?

If you need other ideas on family-friendly movie options, visit [PluggedIn.com](https://www.pluggedin.com)!





CONNECTION POINTS • DAY 4

Take a Personality Quiz With Your Kids

Have you ever taken a personality quiz to determine which of the different personality types you are? What were the results?

While understanding yourself is undeniably important, it is also crucial to extend that same understanding to those around you.

Relating to different personalities is not always easy. It can sometimes lead to frustration and misunderstanding. Everyone processes and responds to situations and conversations in their own unique way. The members of your family are no exception. It can be hard to understand each other when your thinking is so different.

But it's worth it! Knowing how God made each one of your kids unique — as well as how He made *you* as a mom unique — will help you as you make connection points with your son or daughter. Taking a short personality test together, discovering how you are alike and/or different, and then talking about it will help your child feel *known* and begin to build lasting bridges of healthy communication between you and your child.

Be *intentional* in learning more about your kids in order to love them well.



Leader, Thinker, Talker, Peacemaker Quiz

So, who in your family is a Leader, Thinker, Talker, or Peacemaker? Take the personality quiz to find out and understand your family's unique strengths.



focusonthefamily.com/personalityquiz

DISCUSSING PERSONALITIES WITH YOUR FAMILY

As a family, share your results and get to know each other's personality type. Don't miss opportunities to compliment one another on the various strengths each personality brings! Make this time about solutions rather than pointing out each other's weaknesses. Create an environment in your home where each family member's perspective is valued and considered. As you discuss the personality quiz results and the personality differences with your family, here are some questions to help you along:

- Which personality is my preference? What are my strengths and opportunities for growth during this time?
- What is it like for others to be with me?
- Which feelings tend to blind me emotionally or throw me off track?
- What have you learned about the other personalities in your home? Any surprises? How does this change how you connect with them?
- What are solutions for connection with others in our family?
- How could Colossians 3:12-17 & Galatians 5:22-23 help you manage your differences well?



CONNECTION POINTS • DAY 5

Plan a Morning Routine With Your Kids

Mornings can feel rushed and hectic, especially if there is no set routine in place. Planning a morning routine with your kids (even a simple one) can help slow down the pace and allow you a chance to breathe before heading into the rest of the day. Having a routine in place can help structure your child's day and give them a sense of stability and normalcy, which can reduce anxiety and stress.

When you create your morning routine with your kids, plan for some clear connection points. It could involve having devotions or reading a Bible passage or story together before breakfast. How about reading a joke

or word of the day? Or maybe you and your kids make breakfast together before sitting down to eat it as a family. It could be as simple as planning a brief (60 second) face-to-face, eye-contact connection with each child, where you ask them a question, or share some life-giving words for them to take with them throughout the day.

Be intentional in creating a routine that allows for connection and getting the day off on the right foot – together.



Some Ideas

Here are just some ideas for planning a simple morning routine. You can't do them all! And not all of them are a good fit for your family dynamic. Maybe you're not a morning person!

Try choosing 1 or 2 simple things that would work well for *your* family, and see how it goes.

- Drink coffee together (or tea, or juice) and spend 5 minutes intentionally talking
- Come up with some type of 60 second check-in with each child (face-to-face)
- Read one Bible verse before everyone heads out the door (take turns reading)
- Play fun, uplifting music in the background of the morning hustle (maybe rotate who gets to pick the playlist)
- Come up with a family saying or motto that you remind each other of each day
- Be intentional about taking at least a few minutes to pray together for the day, and for people you'll come into contact with
- Come up with a question for the day
- Read some new, interesting fact each day
- Find a joke of the day
- Read out loud a verse of the day
- Share a "truth reminder" of the day (you are loved, you are a child of God, be a blessing to others, we stick together, etc.)
- Remind each other of and talk through one "fruit of the spirit" (Galatians 5:22-23) every day on the way to school
- Make a list of morning jobs, and give everyone in the family a part to play

If you have a family dynamic that doesn't allow for a morning routine (work shifts, different schedules, etc.), don't worry! Just think of how you can make **family connection points** a regular part of your day.



"When you get right down to it, intentional living is about living your best story."

– John Maxwell





CONNECTION POINTS • DAY 6

Talk About Faith With Your Kids

Talking about faith with your kids is one of the most critical connections a parent can make with their kids.

God has a story planned for each of your children, and you are an important part of that story. You get to introduce them to Jesus, His word, and the life of faith that He calls them to.

There are many ways to share your faith with your children. You can read the Bible together and discuss what you read as a family. Or you can go on nature walks and talk about how God created the world and everything in it. When God does something

extraordinary in your family's lives, don't forget to celebrate and share with each other how He is working.

Spending time together reading scripture and praying every day is a powerful goal. If you're not there, start by engaging in some conversations with your children, and work towards making spiritual growth a daily pursuit in your family.

Be *intentional* in sharing your faith and God's love with your children so that they know how loved they are in His sight and yours.



Faith Conversation Starters

If you're looking for somewhere to start in faith conversations with your kids, you could pick a question or two from the list below as a starting point. Make sure to allow your kids to explore the topic, and ask their own questions.

- Is Jesus God?
- How Can Jesus Be Both God and Human?
- Did Jesus Teach That He's the Only Way to God?
- What Did Jesus Teach about Loving Others?
- How Can We Know What Jesus Would Have Taught on Subjects He Didn't Address?
- What's the Relationship between Old Testament Animal Sacrifices and Jesus's Death?
- What Did Jesus's Death Accomplish?
- If Jesus Is God, How Could He Die?
- What Historical Evidence Is There for Jesus's Resurrection?
- Why Does It Matter If Jesus Was Resurrected?
- What Is a Christian?
- What Does It Mean to Be Saved?
- Why Do Christians Want to Share Their Faith with Others?

If you're looking for some ideas on how to guide the conversation, and provide grounded answers, these questions (and more) are covered in the book by **Natasha Crain**, *Talking With Your Kids About Jesus*.





CONNECTION POINTS • DAY 7

Create a Plan for Continuing To Make Connection Points With Your Kids

You've reached Day 7 of the Intentional Mom Experience! Perhaps you made some new connection points with your children, or reinforced some ones you've already established. Well done, mom!

Let's keep the momentum going.

Create a plan for how you can continue to intentionally make connection points with your children. In what ways can you take the points listed in this guide and expand on them? Are there other ideas that you have that aren't listed here?

Take some time to brainstorm those ideas, and then create a calendar for when and how you will implement them. Scheduling time on the calendar with your kids — just as you would any other important appointment — will help you to create consistency in making those connections with your kids. Whether it is scheduling an activity daily, weekly, or even monthly, those calendar reminders will be invaluable.

You've got this, mom! These intentional connection points you make with your kids will impact them for the rest of their lives.

"Many people have been led to believe that an intentional parent is a perfect parent, which is not true. There are many things I have started with a great deal of intention that I didn't completely follow through on, including a weekly family meeting in our home. But we try our best to have intentional conversations and time together. I have yet to meet a family that has been perfectly intentional along the way. However, I can tell you about many couples who are thankful they have learned to be more intentional in their parenting because of what it did for them, their kids, and their family."

- Dr. Danny Huerta



Dessert Crepes Recipe

This recipe first appeared in the June 2013 issue of Clubhouse magazine; used by permission.

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